

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 01147 01 OF 02 191922Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01
CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-11 FMC-01 TRSE-00
H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 FRB-03 STR-06 LAB-04 SIL-01
/151 W

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P 191909Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4362
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION USBERLIN PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 01147

USEEC

DEPT FOR EUR/RPE

PASS COMMERCE/NMFS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EEC, EFIS
SUBJ: EC FISHERY COUNCIL, JANUARY 16-18, 1978

REF: 77 BRUSSELS 18329 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: THE JANUARY 16-18 SESSION OF THE EC
FISHERY COUNCIL (TECHNICALLY A CONTINUATION UNDER THE
BELGIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE SUSPENDED DECEMBER 5-7
COUNCIL - REFTEL) FAILED TO PRODUCE AGREEMENT ON A
COMMUNITY INTERNAL FISHING REGIME. CONTINUED DEADLOCK
RESULTED FROM UNCHANGED BRITISH DEMANDS FOR AN EXCLUSIVE
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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 01147 01 OF 02 191922Z

UK 12-MILE ZONE AND PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR UK
FISHERMEN IN A 12 TO 50-MILE ZONE, WITH FISHING BEYOND
50 MILES BASED UPON HISTORIC PERFORMANCE. PERMREP AND
COUNCIL OFFICIALS ARE NEVERTHELESS HOPEFUL THAT THE
COASTAL BAND QUESTION CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED
THROUGH AGREEMENT ON SOME VARIATION OF A COMPROMISE
IRISH PROPOSAL, SUBMITTED JANUARY 17, WHICH CALLS FOR

PROTECTION OF COASTAL FISHING INTERESTS THROUGH A FISHING PLAN SYSTEM CONFINING ACTIVITY BY OTHER FISHING FLEETS TO MORE DISTANT WATERS. PERMREP OFFICIALS FROM OTHER MEMBER STATES FEEL THAT THE UK COULD ACCEPT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT IF PACKAGED SO THAT HMG WOULD NOT APPEAR TO BRITISH FISHING INTERESTS TO HAVE SURRENDERED ON THIS ISSUE. IN ORDER TO ALLOW FURTHER STUDY, THE COUNCIL HAS ONCE AGAIN SUSPENDED DELIBERATIONS AND WILL RESUME ON JANUARY 30 IN BRUSSELS WITH BELGIUM AGAIN IN THE CHAIR. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT THE GROUNDWORK FOR COMPROMISE MIGHT BE LAID AT A SCHEDULED INFORMAL MEETING OF THE MINISTERS JANUARY 27 IN BERLIN, WHERE THEY WILL BE ATTENDING THE ANNUAL GERMAN AGRICULTURAL TRADE SHOW (GREEN WEEK). END SUMMARY.

2. COMMISSION PROPOSALS:

AT OUTSET OF JANUARY 16-18 SESSION, EC COMMISSION FORMALLY PRESENTED ITS PROPOSALS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF QUOTAS AMONG THE MEMBER STATES (EXCLUDING LUXEMBOURG), WHICH WERE REVISED AFTER THE DECEMBER 5-7 COUNCIL TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF LOSSES IN THIRD COUNTRY WATERS WITH COMING INTO FORCE OF 200-MILE ZONES. COMPARED TO 1973-1976 AVERAGE CATCHES, THE COMMISSION'S NEW FIGURES CALL FOR LARGE DECREASES IN AUTHORIZED 1978 CATCHES FOR ALL MEMBER STATES BUT IRELAND (26 PERCENT INCREASE) AND THE UK (0.5 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BRUSSE 01147 01 OF 02 191922Z

PERCENT DECREASE). THE PROPOSALS PROVIDE THE UK A 24 PERCENT SHARE OF TOTAL CATCHES IN ALL EC WATERS AND 32.8 PERCENT OF CATCHES IN THE EC'S NORTH ATLANTIC ZONE (AS COMPARED WITH THE 44 PERCENT WHICH THE BRITISH DEMAND).

3. THE COMMISSION ALSO PROPOSED THAT A STRICTER PROGRAM OF STOCK CONTROL BE ADOPTED ALONG WITH THE QUOTA SYSTEM. IT SUGGESTED THAT THIS MIGHT INVOLVE THE USE OF FISHING PLANS FOR ZONES AROUND WEST SCOTLAND, WEST IRELAND, AND GREENLAND, AS WELL AS OTHER AREAS WHERE THE STATE OF FISH STOCKS IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE; AND IT CALLED FOR THE ADOPTION OF A COMMUNITY LICENSING SYSTEM FOR ALL FISHING IN EC WATERS.

4. UK RESPONSE:

UK AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES MINISTER SILKIN ASSERTED THAT THE COMMISSION'S REVISED QUOTA FIGURES FALL SHORT OF UK REQUIREMENTS, ADDING THAT, IN THE UK VIEW, FIGURES MUST BE BASED UPON EVENTUAL ESTABLISHMENT OF EXCLUSIVE 12-MILE BANDS, PREFERENTIAL ACCESS FOR UK FISHERMEN OUT

TO 50 MILES (BASED ON NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL NEEDS
AS WELL AS LOSSES IN THIRD COUNTRY WATERS), AND DETER-
MINATION OF FISHING EFFORT BEYOND 50 MILES ON THE
BASIS OF HISTORIC PERFORMANCE. SILKIN LEFT THE DOOR OPEN
TO COMPROMISE, HOWEVER, BY EMPHASIZING THAT THE UK REMAINS
PREPARED TO DISCUSS "EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVES" TO A 12
TO 50-MILE BELT.

5. IRISH PROPOSAL:

IRISH FISHERIES MINISTER LENIHAN'S FISHING PLAN PROPOSAL
WAS CAUTIOUSLY RECEIVED BY SILKIN, BUT PERMREP AND
COUNCIL OFFICIALS HOPE THAT IT CAN SERVE AS THE BASIS
FOR AN ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE, ASSUMING THAT SILKIN IS
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PAGE 04 BRUSSE 01147 01 OF 02 191922Z

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 01147 02 OF 02 191925Z
ACTION EUR-12

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P 191909Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4363
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 BRUSSELS 01147

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PROVIDED AN OVERALL PACKAGE HE CAN SELL TO HOSTILE BRITISH

FISHING INTERESTS. ESSENTIALLY, THE IRISH PROPOSAL SEEKS TO ACCOMPLISH THE SAME EFFECT AS EXCLUSIVE NATIONAL ZONES, WHILE NOT EMBRACING THAT CONCEPT AS SUCH. LENIHAN PROPOSED INSTEAD THAT FISHING IN 12 TO 50-MILE ZONES AROUND THE UK AND IRELAND BE GOVERNED BY FISHING PLANS WHICH WOULD DIRECT FISHING BY OTHER MEMBER STATE FLEETS TO AREAS AWAY FROM THE COASTS.

6. HOPES FOR COMPROMISE:

COMMISSION WILL NOW TRY TO PUT TOGETHER A SYNTHESIS OF THE FISHING PLAN SYSTEM PROPOSED BY LENIHAN AND THE CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY OTHER MEMBER STATES RELATIVE TO ITS ENFORCEMENT. COUNCIL AND PERMREP OFFICIALS EXPECT THAT THE COMMISSION WILL PROPOSE TO THE JANUARY 30 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 01147 02 OF 02 191925Z

COUNCIL SESSION A SYSTEM UNDER WHICH 12-MILE ZONES WOULD BE GOVERNED BY EXISTING TREATY PROVISIONS, AND FISHING PLANS WOULD CONTROL ACTIVITY IN WATERS FURTHER OUT, ALTHOUGH ZONES COVERED BY THOSE PLANS WOULD NOT FALL NEATLY INTO 12 TO 50-MILE BOUNDARIES. SUCH A SYSTEM, ALONG WITH THE AS YET UNAPPROVED QUOTAS AND, POSSIBLY, LICENSES, WOULD ALLOW DE FACTO DOMINANT PREFERENCE FOR THE UK AND IRELAND, EVEN THOUGH THIS WOULD NOT SPECIFICALLY BE PROVIDED BY REGULATION. HOWEVER, THE UK MIGHT STILL BE EXPECTED TO RESIST CONTINUED FISHING ON THE BASIS OF HISTORIC RIGHTS WITHIN 12 MILES. SILKIN HIMSELF REMARKED TO REPORTERS ON JANUARY 18 THAT, IF THE UK IS UNABLE TO GET SATISFACTORY COMMUNITY MEASURES, IT WILL REVERT TO NATIONAL CONSERVATION MEASURES. OPPOSITION TO ANY HARD-LINE BRITISH POSITION WILL CONTINUE TO BE LED BY DENMARK (WHICH HAS THE LARGEST STAKE IN ACCESS TO UK WATERS) AND GERMANY (WHOSE CONCERNS OVER EQUAL ACCESS TO EC WATERS FOR ALL MEMBER STATES WERE OUTLINED IN A LETTER SENT LAST WEEK TO COMMISSION PRESIDENT JENKINS BY CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT). HINTON

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